

**INFLUENCE OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION
SKILLS ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES: A CASE
STUDY OF BEIJING HUALU PETROCHEMICAL BRANCH
OFFICE**

LI XIN

UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

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**Influence of Interpersonal Communication Skills on Conflict
Management Styles: A Case Study of Beijing Hualu
Petrochemical Branch Office**

A thesis submitted to the College of Business in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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By

LI XIN

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ABSTRACT

One of the key factors in today's successful management of organizations is for managers to know how to manage the conflict. However in order to be successful in managing conflict, a manager must be able to know what kind of skills they can use to manage these conflicts, and what kind of conflict management style that is suitable to manage these conflicts. One of the most important factors that can influence the conflict management style is interpersonal communication skills. In this study, the survey method through e-mail was adopted to investigate the employees of a petrochemical firm in Beijing, China. A 66 % response rate was obtained. The three main factors that were seen to influence the interpersonal communication skills were: culture influence, team management and communication. These factors were observed to have some relationships with conflict management styles in the sample studied.

Keywords: culture influence, team management, communication, conflict management style.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description of Abbreviation
CL	Culture Influence
TM	Team Management
COM	Communication
CMS	Conflict Management Style
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Conflict is a pervasive aspect in both professional and social interactions. It can occur among family members, friends, colleagues and even between superiors and subordinates. As long as there is a human element present, conflict is certain to exist. Conflict is so much a part of our daily lives that most of the time we barely notice it. As human beings, we have our own interests; goals, purposes and destination. So conflict is a normal, and even healthy, part of our relationships.

Whenever we talk about conflict, the first thing that comes to our mind is that it is a negative and a destructive element to be avoided at all costs. Low employees motivation (Dana, 2001), lower productivity (Adkins, 2003), relational strain in the workplace (Tamam, Hassan & Yaid, 1997), and stressed-related medical claims (Smith, 2002) are some of the problems connected to conflict. All the issues associated with conflicts are bad as times are wasted on solving the conflicts (Bacal, 2004).

Whatever we think, conflicts in the workplace are not something that can be ignored. Conflicts will grow and become worse if it is neglected. Individuals need to possess the skills and knowledge on how to manage the conflict as much as possible when the inevitable conflict surfaces regardless of whether you are an employee or employer. Since the management of conflict has become one of the important roles played by managers in organizations (Roper, 2005), so the workplace conflict management has become one of the crucial symbols for long term viability and success for a business (Oudeh, 1999).

How can we define the nature of conflict? Do all conflicts bring bad effects to the

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